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Policies and Guidelines

Welcome to the psychotherapy practice of Allyson Kane, MSW, LCSW. This handout will address some common questions and concerns about the policies and procedures involved in counseling at my office.

Psychotherapy Services: I consider it an honor to serve as a therapist for my clients, and am committed to providing the safest, most respectful environment possible for them. I believe that seeking therapy is an indication of strength and I am committed to helping clients grow and change by working with them toward mutually held goals. People have differing goals for therapy: some wish to resolve a crisis situation, others wish to work toward longer-term goals and changes. This is an entirely personal decision, and I will use the client's goals as the basis for treatment.

Psychotherapy calls for a very active effort on your part. In order for the therapy to be most successful, you will have to work on things we talk about both in session and at home. Psychotherapy can have benefits and risks. Because therapy often involves discussing unpleasant aspects of your life, you may experience uncomfortable feelings like sadness, guilt, anger, frustration, loneliness, and helplessness. On the other hand, psychotherapy has also been shown to have benefits for people who go through it. Therapy often leads to better relationships, solutions to specific problems, and significant reductions in feelings of distress; however, there are no guarantees of what you will experience.

Our first few sessions will involve an evaluation of your needs. By the end of your evaluation, I will be able to offer you some first impressions of what our work will include. You should evaluate this information along with your own opinions of whether you feel comfortable working with me. Therapy involves a commitment of time, money, and energy, so you should be careful about the therapist you select. If you have any questions about my procedures, we should discuss them as they arise. If for any reason you are not satisfied with the counseling process and after discussion your concerns are not resolved to your satisfaction, I will provide you with a referral to another competent therapist.

Confidentiality: State and federal laws protect your personal health information and ensure the confidentiality of your treatment. I respect your privacy and am committed to maintaining confidentiality of your treatment, our sessions, and our conversations. In order to share information with other health professionals, you will need to provide a signed “release of information.” However, there are a few exceptions to maintaining your confidentiality:

- If I believe a client is at risk of hurting him or herself, I may be obligated to seek hospitalization and/or contact family members who may help provide protection to the client.
- If I believe that a client is at risk of hurting someone else, I am required to contact authorities and/or the other person in order to provide protection.
- If I suspect that a client is abusing and/or neglecting a child, elderly person, or a disabled person, I am required by law to contact the authorities to provide protection.
- If a client becomes involved in a lawsuit in which mental health is an issue, the court or lawyers may obtain information from me.
- If an account is 60 days past due, I may notify a collection agency and release a client’s name and necessary contact information.
- Clients who are under 18 years-old are considered minors in the state of North Carolina. I may share information related to client safety to minor client’s parents and/or legal guardians.

In order to best meet your needs, I may seek consultation or supervision from another licensed mental health professional. If this is the case, all identifying information and your confidentiality will be protected.

Meetings: I normally conduct an evaluation during the first few sessions. I typically schedule a one-hour session per week at a time we agree upon, although some sessions may be longer or more frequent.

Professional fees: My fee is \$100 per session unless you are using insurance. Payment is due at the beginning of each session unless we agree otherwise. I accept cash or check. I do not accept credit card. If you are paying with cash please bring the exact amount as I am unable to make change.

If checks are written from an account with insufficient funds, you will be held responsible for the amount of the check and any fees accrued. Accounts that are over 60 days past due may be turned over to a collection agency or charged

interest. The accrued interest will be added to account balances. Names and necessary information will be released to collection agencies.

Cancellations: Please give at least 24 hours notice for cancellations. Insurance companies do not reimburse for missed sessions. Clients will be charged for a full counseling session (\$100.00) if less than 24 hours notice is given. In the event of an emergency or illness, this policy may be waived, and I am happy to discuss it with you. If you are running late for an appointment please notify me by phone. If you are more than 15 minutes late and have not notified me your session will be cancelled.

Contact Information: I check my voicemail throughout the day and generally return calls between 10am and 7pm Monday through Friday. I try to return calls within 24 hours. If you are unable to reach me and have a clinical emergency please go to your closest emergency room or call 911. If I am unavailable for an extended period of time, I will provide you with the name of a colleague to contact, if necessary.

Please do not hesitate to ask any questions regarding this policy. I look forward to working with you.

CONSENT FOR TREATMENT

I understand and agree to all the above information.

Signature of client

Date